

# CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL OF POPULAR LITERATURE

Science and Arts.

CONDUCTED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS.

No. 494.

SATURDAY, JUNE 20, 1863.

PRICE 14d.

## MISSING.

THERE is something in human affairs even more terrible than Death itself—namely, Disappearance: the sudden snatching away of a man, from amidst his fellow-creatures, who either know not what to think of the matter, or who have a score of elucidations to offer, not one of which is in the least degree satisfactory. Compared with death, indeed, such things are uncommon, yet, probably, there are few of my elder readers within whose personal knowledge something of this nature has not occurred. At all events, we have all read of such things, and been affected by them more than by any other species of narration, with the exception, perhaps, of ghost-stories, which are scarcely more mysterious, and are open to objections on the score of credibility. How strangely that episode strikes us, in the *Life of Grimaldi*, where his brother, after the lapse of many years, comes to the stage-door of the theatre to see him, and after a promise of meeting him that night at supper, disappears thenceforth and for ever. I remember little of the book besides that incident, which stands out with strange distinctness among the Clown's reverses and successes, and the poor tinsel of theatrical life.

Even about inanimate objects that have been suddenly removed from human ken, there hangs some interest, as, for instance, about the Great Seal of England, filched from Lord Thurlow's house in Ormond Street, and cast into nobody knows what melting-pot—made 'gold-soup' of for nobody knows whose benefit! I don't feel nearly so interested about that Chancellor's Seal which foolish James II. cast into the Thames, in the malicious hope of interrupting public business, because that was fished up and found.

What a terrible thing, again, is a Lost Ship; how much worse than any shipwreck, which tells its own tale in spars, and fragments, and drowned men cast on shore! A ship that leaves its port, and is perhaps 'spoken with' once or twice, and then is no more seen or heard of; one, that not only never reaches its haven, but meets with we know not what fate. We cannot even say of her as of that great ship, which, lying on a calm day in front of a populous town, suddenly heeled over and went to the bottom: 'Down went the *Royal George*, with all her crew complete.' She may have been blown up, for all that we know. She may have been borne northward by some hitherto unknown

current, and imprisoned in adamant icebergs, and all her crew have petrified. She may have been carried to the tropics, and been becalmed for months, and rotted, men and timbers; or in some island in those dark purple spheres of sea, her people and their progeny may still exist, cut off for ever from old associations, familiar faces, and home, with her planks laid in the coral caves, never more to bear human freight. What a shudder still comes over us when we remember the *President*! What a weird and awful mystery lies still about those explorers of the North, although we know that they be dead, and may see at any time in Greenwich Hospital their last tokens. There is scarce a ghastlier sight, to my thinking, than that little heap of tarnished silver-forks, abandoned in those far-away icy solitudes. What despair must have been in the hearts of those who left them there, and pushed on, God alone knows whither!

Of all the evil things that were permitted in the Bad Old Times, it seems to me the misery that it must needs have caused in humble homes: the breadwinner suddenly carried off, and the wife and children not only made destitute, but harrowed with the thought that he was dead. There was no alacrity in consolation among the officers of his majesty's tenders; the kidnapped wretch might be able to communicate his position, or he might not. A state of things less endurable than even the recruiting in Poland, in as far as the horror of what may be exceeds the pang of the misfortune that is.

The imagination magnifies the unknown evil. I well remember the state into which the public school where I was educated was thrown, one fine morning, by the intelligence that Bilkins *major* had been sent away in the night; had been carried off home, or elsewhere, and was never more to return to pursue his classical studies. The previous day, he had construed his Greek with his usual infelicity; had distinguished himself at football as much as ever; had added the ordinary amount to his tick at the pastry-cook's—and yet, behold he was Gone! What had he done? What *had* he done, to be withdrawn with such excessive suddenness from the midst of his fellow-sinners? Not even Bilkins *minor*, his brother, could tell us that. We lingered about in knots all day, discussing his possible crime; and if it was the object of our head-master to hush matters up by this secret method of ejection, that object was certainly

not attained. Even now, after the lapse of I dare not say how long, a certain weird and appalling mystery clings to Bilkins, with whom I have no acquaintance, but whom I meet going about Lincoln's Inn, to outward appearance a very ordinary barrister. The particular offence that caused his abrupt departure from school was never known, although it must surely have been one of those which we imputed to him. If not, it must have been Original Sin indeed—pure Bilkinsism.

In 1723, a gentleman named Annesley was expected by his friends from Rotterdam, to arrive in London by a certain vessel, in which, he wrote, he had already secured a berth. On his non-appearance, a search was instituted among the shipping in the Thames; the craft which he had described was boarded, and the captain—one Philip Roche—and crew examined. They denied all knowledge of such a person. There was nothing to disprove this except Mr Annesley's letter, which gave, however, such details as it was impossible to mistake. Upon a representation to the Secretary of State, the vessel was placed under surveillance, and the letters sent by the suspected persons were opened on their passage through the post. A communication from Roche to his wife furnished the clue to quite a labyrinth of nautical crime. In his early career, this wretch had driven a tolerable trade by sinking ships which he had previously insured beyond their value; but having been appointed mate to a trader bound for Cape Breton, he had mutinied with others of the crew, and thrown the captain and half-a-dozen sailors overboard. It had then been his intention to turn pirate in the western seas; but finding his provisions getting short, he had been obliged to put back to Portsmouth, where he painted the vessel afresh, and gave her a fictitious name. Then he traded—commencing with the stolen cargo—but with this hideous addition to his commercial gains, that he was ready to take passengers, with valuable property, to any port they pleased; only when he got a little way out to sea, he drowned them; and thus he had murdered the unsuspecting Mr Annesley. For this, Roche was hanged at Execution Dock; but before that righteous punishment overtook him, what unimaginable misery must such a monster have caused! what mysterious woe! what fruitless and heart-sickening hope!

A still more curious case, but without its tragic horror, was that of Mr Duplex, which occurred in 1787. This gentleman, having arrived from Margate by the hoy one day, had taken a boat in the Thames, to be set on shore at Tower Stairs; this was boarded, however, by some persons calling themselves revenue-officers, who carried him and his portmanteau, on pretence of examining the latter, on board a sloop lying at anchor. Mr Duplex followed his property down to the cabin, when presently, upon looking out of the window, he found himself opposite Greenwich Hospital. He was calmly informed that he was going out to sea, and as he could not be put on shore, had better make himself comfortable. Nobody did him any injury, nor even robbed him of his money; but the crew wore his best shirts and other fashionable garments as though they were their own. For three months he was constantly confined in the cabin, notwithstanding he could frequently hear the sailors leave and return to the ship, and in the latter case, always bringing hampers and boxes with them—had he the least idea at what port it was touching, or even on what coast he was cruising. He was fed, like his captors, upon salt beef and grog, and never made to work, or do anything unpleasant. At length, being permitted to come on deck, he found the sloop to be in the Bay of Beaumaris, North Wales; and the man at the helm telling him he might go on board a fishing-smack that lay alongside, he did so, and was safely landed; and so ended his extraordinary adventure.

The friends of Mr Duplex, who was a young man of considerable property, had offered a large reward for him, dead or alive; and the Thames had been dragged for his body, again and again.

Mysterious as is the sudden disappearance of our fellow-creatures, the interest is considerably intensified when they take a horse and cart with them. Yet that such a startling phenomenon must once at least have occurred, rests upon no less grave an authority than the *Encyclopædia Britannica*. In the beginning of the last century, as the curate of Slegarp, in the Swedish province of Schonen, was engaged with some of his parishioners in digging turf in a drained marshy soil, they came upon an entire wagon and the skeletons of a man and horses several feet below the surface of the ground! If the place had been always a morass, such a disappearance would not have been so inexplicable as it doubtless was at the period of its occurrence. There was once, however, a lake upon the spot, and it is presumed that, in attempting to cross the ice, the unfortunate carter with his steeds and vehicle fell suddenly through, and were swallowed up. If, as was likely, it was on the way home at the conclusion of the day's work, the whole would have frozen over before the morning, and absolutely no trace have been left to account for their disappearance. The explanation was doubtless supplied by Superstition, for whom a finer opportunity can surely never have occurred.

Another instance of the total disappearance of a horse has happened within very modern times. No less celebrated an animal than a certain winner of the Derby was, immediately after that great victory, lost for ever to the admiring eyes of men. There was some talk of his having entered a Veterinary College—to complete his education, I suppose; but such a course could only be paralleled by a Senior Wrangler being sent to a preparatory school to learn arithmetic. A darker story is afloat, that the noble animal was basely murdered on account of his teeth; not, indeed, for the sake of depriving him of those ornaments, but to prevent their revealing the fact, that he was over three years old—past the legal age at which an animal is permitted to run for the Blue Ribbon of the Turf, and therefore not entitled to the honours—and emoluments—he had carried off. The favourite for the Derby of this very year had 'pitfalls' dug for him, so that he might break his legs in his morning 'gallop'; but even that atrocity seems less tremendous than the secret assassination to which the finger of Suspicion points in this case. There has been nothing like it since the murder of the Duke d'Enghien.

To quit horses, and return to humanity, however, the saddest disappearance of which I remember ever to have read was that of a Captain Routh of the Indian army, who came home on leave from Calcutta, to be married to a Miss Ling in Hertfordshire. The better known case of Mr Gordier in Guernsey affords a very close parallel to it in many respects; but the fate of that latter gentleman was discovered for certain, while that of the Indian officer was never cleared up, although open to the darkest suspicion. Captain Routh arrived at Southampton, and was identified as having been a passenger by the coach from that place to London. But after having safely accomplished so many hundred miles, he never attained that place, such a little way off, where his bride awaited him. He neither came nor wrote. She read his name in the list of passengers by the *Europa*, and looked for him hour by hour, in vain. What excuses must not her love have made for him! How she must have clung to one frail chance after another, until her last hope left her! How infinitely more terrible must such vague wretchedness have been to bear, than if she had known him to have been struck down by the fatal sun-ray of Bengal, or drowned in Indian seas. Where was he? What could have become of him?

This young lady had a cousin of the name of Penrhyn, about her own age, who had been brought up in the same family, and, although much attached to her, had not been hitherto considered to entertain towards her warmer feelings than those of kinship. But as month after month, and year after year, went by without tidings of the missing bridegroom, he began to court her as a lover. She, for her part, refused to listen to his addresses, but her mother favoured them; and plunged in melancholy, the girl did not take the pains to repulse him which probably she would otherwise have done. She accepted, or at least she did not reject, a ring of his, which she even wore on her finger; but whenever he spoke to her, or tendered her any service, she turned from him with something like loathing. Whether this was remarked upon so much before the following circumstances occurred, it would be interesting to learn; but all who knew them now testify, that whereas in earlier days she had taken pleasure in her cousin's society, it seemed to become absolutely hateful to her, subsequent to her calamity.

About three years after Captain Routh's disappearance, a brother-officer and friend of his, one Major Brooks, having business in England, was invited into Hertfordshire by Mrs Ling, at the urgent request of her daughter. So far, however, from being overcome by the association of the major's presence with her lost lover, Miss Ling seemed to take pleasure in nothing so much as in hearing him talk of his missing friend. Mr Penrhyn appears to have taken this in some dudgeon; perhaps he grew apprehensive that a present rival might be even more fatal to his hopes than the memory of an absent one; but, at all events, the two gentlemen quarrelled. Mr Penrhyn—who lived in the neighbourhood—protested that he would not enter the house during the major's stay, and remained at his own residence. During this estrangement, the conversation between Brooks and Miss Ling had Captain Routh for its topic more than ever. In speaking of the absence of all clue to what had become of him, the major observed: 'There is one thing that puzzles me almost as much as the loss of my poor friend himself. You say that his luggage was found at the inn where the coach stopped in London?'

'It was,' said the lady. 'I am thankful to say that I have numberless tokens of his dear self.'

'There is one thing, though, which I wonder that he parted with,' pursued the major, 'and did not always carry about with him, as he promised to do. I was with him in the bazaar at Calcutta when he bought for you that twisted ring!'

'That ring,' cried the poor girl—'that ring?' and with a frightful shriek, she instantly swooned away.

Her mother came running in to know what was the matter; Brooks made some evasive explanation, but, while she was applying restoratives, inquired, as carelessly as he could, who had given to her daughter that beautiful ring?

'Oh, Willy Penrhyn,' said she. 'That is the only present, poor fellow, he could ever get Rachel to accept.'

Upon this Major Brooks went straight to Penrhyn's house, but was denied admittance; whereupon he wrote to him the following letter:

SIR—I have just seen a ring upon the hand of the betrothed wife of my murdered friend, Herbert Routh; he bought it for that purpose himself, but you have presented it. I know that he always wore it on his little finger, and never parted with it by any chance. I demand, therefore, to know by what means you became possessed of it. I shall require to see you in person at five o'clock this afternoon, and shall take no denial. JAMES BROOKS.

The major arrived at Mr Penrhyn's house at the time specified, but found him a dead man. He had taken poison upon the receipt of the above letter;

and so, as is supposed, departed the only human being that could have unravelled the mystery of the missing Captain Routh. Still, it is barely possible that he may not have been his murderer after all; if he were, it was surely the height of imprudence to have given away a thing so easily identified, and that to the very person of all others from whom he should have concealed it. It is curious, that directly we begin to suspect the commission of a particular crime, however dreadful, and seem to recognise the offender, as in this case, the horror of the matter subsides. But, as we said at the beginning of this paper, Disappearance is, in truth, more terrible than Death; nor should this fact be overlooked by the opponents of public executions. There should, of course, be enough of official spectators to set the carrying-out of the sentence beyond all cavil; but it is worthy of consideration, whether the sudden withdrawal of a wretch from the living world—his disappearance at the jail-gate for ever—would not strike a greater terror into the criminal population, than the present brutal exhibitions outside of Newgate.

#### AS TO THE JAWBONE.

For several weeks in this spring, a very agitating question in certain circles of London society was—'What of the jawbone?' It must have appeared a very mysterious question to many who chanced to hear it; and probably the great mass of our readers, hearing it now for the first time, wonder considerably what it could refer to. We shall endeavour to enlighten them 'as to the jawbone.'

Probably most of them have been made aware that, since 1859, the English geologists have accepted as genuine certain findings of flint weapons in the drift of the valley of the Somme in Picardy, which had for twenty years before been knocking at their doors in vain. It is now a piece of fully-sanctioned scientific doctrine that, in certain beds of ancient gravel, lying over chalk, containing remains of extinct species of elephant, rhinoceros, hyena, bear, &c., and so proved to be of vast, though unprecise age, there are found proofs of the contemporaneity of man, in the form of implements, such as hatchets, spear-heads, and knives, fashioned by his hands out of the rough flints which the subjacent strata supply. These relics occur in great numbers at various gravel-pits along the valley of the Somme within a space of about twenty-five miles, particularly at St Acheul, near Amiens, and at Menchecourt and Moulin-Quignon, near Abbeville. Local antiquaries—M. Boucher de Perthes of Abbeville, a Dr Rigollot, and others—have been in the custom of gathering and storing them up for many years; and there is not now the least doubt entertained on any hand that they are really the work of man's hands, and that they are actually, and not by any imposture, found imbedded in the ancient gravel along with remains of extinct species of mammalia, so as to demonstrate a greater antiquity than any yet surmised for the human race.

So far well; yet it was remarked with some surprise, and even as a justification for some lingering shade of scepticism, that no relic of humanity itself, not a single bone, had been found in these ancient beds. Accordingly, it was a matter of no small gratification to many when an announcement appeared at the end of March, to the effect that a human jawbone had been taken out of the tool-bearing drift at Moulin-Quignon. The history of this discovery was stated as follows by a writer in the local journal (*L'Abbevilleois*) of April 9: 'Towards the end of last month, a workman in the gravel-pit of Moulin-Quignon (on the outskirts of Abbeville) brought to M. Boucher de Perthes, along with a worked flint, a small fragment of bone, which he had found close by it. Having divested



this bone of the sand with which it was covered, M. Boucher de Perthes found implanted in it a tooth, which, although very imperfect (the crown having been almost entirely destroyed, apparently by caries), was distinctly recognisable as a human molar. He immediately repaired to the gravel-pit, examined the place in which the worked flint and the tooth were said to have been found, and satisfied himself that there could not have been any accidental or secondary mode of introduction of the tooth, but that it must have been imbedded (if the workman's account was to be trusted) in the original deposit. Naturally expecting that, where one fragment had turned up, others might not be far off, M. Boucher de Perthes urged the workmen to proceed very carefully with their excavations, and directed them, if they should come upon anything like a bone, at once to inform him, without removing it from its place. On the 28th of March, another workman came to inform him that what appeared to be a bone had just shewn itself in the gravel; and on going to the spot, M. Boucher de Perthes found that it was really so, the projection of the bone from the face of the excavation being about eight-tenths of an inch. He carefully removed the sand from around it, and himself extracted it from its matrix; the bone proved to be the lateral half of a lower jaw, unquestionably human. From the immediate neighbourhood of this jaw, a companion of M. Boucher de Perthes (M. Oswald Dimprie, well known in Abbeville as an archaeologist and draughtsman) disintered a flint hatchet. . . . M. Boucher de Perthes had yesterday the kindness to place in my hands this precious fragment, and I was immediately struck with its almost black colour, its solidity, and its weight; all these peculiarities (which are in marked contrast to the characters of the bones ordinarily found in these gravel-pits) being obviously due to one and the same cause—namely, metallic (ferruginous?) infiltration. The worked flints and the ordinary flints obtained from the same deposit are all of them characterised by a like depth of colour, which is not seen in those taken from any other part of the same pit, or from any other gravel-pit yet opened in the neighbourhood of Abbeville. Of the anatomical characters of this jaw, I should not wish to give a decided opinion without a more careful examination than I had the opportunity of making; but my impression is, that they differ very decidedly from those of the same bone in any race at present inhabiting Western Europe. . . . We have, therefore, not merely the personal testimony of M. Boucher de Perthes and others who were present at the disinterment, but the evidence of the *pièce de circonstance* itself (which by some will be regarded as yet more satisfactory), that this bone *could not* have come from any less depth in the gravel-bed than that in which it is stated to have been found; and I cannot myself conceive that any one who carefully examines the undisturbed condition of that bed can entertain a doubt that the bone in question is a *true fossil*, dating back to the time of its original deposition. I may add, that the gravel-bed of Moulin-Quignon is about 100 feet above the present level of the river, and therefore corresponds in position with the *upper gravels* of St Acheul, not with the *lower gravels* of Menchecourt; so that, if we accept the conclusions of Mr Prestwich as to the relative ages of these gravels, this human jaw was buried in the deepest (and therefore the oldest) portion of the earliest of these fluvial deposits.

Here was a sufficiently precise statement, as one would have thought. It is, however, a matter on which vastly important inferences hang, and the English geologists were resolved to exercise their usual caution before accepting the fossil as genuine. Dr Hugh Falconer, whose palaeontological researches in India have placed him in the highest rank as a man of science; Mr Joseph Prestwich, who is admittedly the most

expert man in regard to the superficial formation in England, and whose favourable verdict first attracted English attention to the flint implements of the Somme; and Mr John Evans, a sagacious antiquary, visited the scene of the discovery, examined the jawbone and the flint weapons found near it, and took a careful survey of the whole of the attendant circumstances. They were at once satisfied that the weapons were modern and spurious, and that the jawbone, although bearing some characters shewing affinity to forms among the Esquimaux and the savages of Australia—the posterior angle shewing what Dr Falconer called 'a marsupial amount of inversion'—nevertheless was only a clever imposition practised by the *terraciers* of the gravel-pits. For this decision as to the jawbone, the principal ground was afforded by the discovery, that the single molar tooth found in the jaw, when sawed up, was fresh and full of gelatine. 'There,' said Dr Falconer, 'was an end of the case.' Yet he, after all, admitted that the imposture was 'cunningly clever' to an extraordinary degree, and that there was something singular 'in a jawbone combining so many peculiarities having been hit upon by un instructed workmen.'\*

The French investigators not being so easily convinced of the alleged imposture as the English, it was afterwards agreed that there should be a convention of experts of both nations to sit upon the subject at Paris, and try to come to a verdict which should be final and decisive. On the English side were Dr Falconer and Mr Prestwich, with the addition of Dr Carpenter and Mr George Busk. The French gentlemen were M. de Quatrefages, Mr Milne-Edwards, M. Lartet, M. Delesse, and M. Desnoyers. They spent three days in examining the fossil and the flints, and the jawbone was sawn through in their presence, and found, like the tooth, to be fresh. The English gentlemen adhered with more firmness than ever to the belief that it was a case of imposture, and some of the French savans were shaken in the faith they had formerly held. It was arranged, however, that before a final decision, the commission should adjourn to Abbeville, and make some new investigations on the spot.

This was a fortunate move; but its results were such as to read an impressive lesson regarding hasty judgment. The English experts, who had pronounced the flints to be spurious, obtained some of precisely the same character and condition from the gravel with their own hands; so that their assumed tests of genuineness for the flint implements proved to be wholly fallacious. The evidence for the genuineness of the jawbone was supported by so much 'direct testimony,' that it was now unanimously accepted by the commission. Thus, all that had been done and said in April on this important subject was, in May, reversed—with but one small piece of reservation. Dr Falconer and Mr Busk, while fully admitting the genuineness of the relics—that is to say, that they were not impostures, but really had been found in the drift—professed that they could not regard the jawbone as of 'any very great antiquity,' or 'of an antiquity equal to that assigned to the deposits in which it was found.' The only thing we can understand as meant or implied in this dictum is, that the bed in which the flint weapons, the jawbone, and the relics of the extinct mammalia, have been found, is not of any very great age after all—an idea which appears to be supported by the venerable Elie de Beaumont, but which is beset with fully as great difficulties as any other. Be it observed, that the beds of the Somme drift are what Mr Prestwich calls high-level drifts—that is, drifts of the greater relative antiquity. There have been great geological changes in France since they were formed. There have also been great zoological changes, including

\* Letter of Dr Falconer, *Times*, April 25, 1863.

the extinction of elephantoid animals. How is all this to be made compatible with the conclusion arrived at by the two dissentients?

To us outer barbarians, it is apt to appear that, as our English geologists misjudged the flints from fallacious symptoms, so may they now be misjudging the fossil. Those appearances of freshness which make them doubt the antiquity, may be compatible with antiquity after all. It must depend on surrounding conditions whether the animal matter in a bone is carried away quickly or slowly, or that it is ever carried away. If we are not mistaken, traces of animal matter have been found in fossils of much older date than the Drift. Supposing favourable conditions in the black crusty gravel out of which the jawbone was taken, the freshness might have continued to characterise the fossil for countless ages yet to come. We shall not, then, be surprised if the opinion of Dr Falconer shall undergo yet another change.

### SQUIRE MELFORD'S FAMILY.

#### IN TWO CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER II.

A VERY bustling town is the town of Subridge—bustling with business, not with pleasure; many are the rumbling wagons, few the carriages, that pass through its paved streets. In the environs of Subridge, there are neither pretty villas nor picturesque churches; but broad roads, dusty or muddy with much heavy traffic, and small public-houses, only a few yards apart, for the refreshment or temptation of the numerous carters who pass that way.

The small houses on each side of Beech Street are let in single rooms to some of the poor, and not over-sober work-people employed in the various mills in the neighbourhood of the town. But at the end of the street is a good-sized house, with a small garden in front, facing the High Street of Subridge. Once, Beech House really was what it now only professes to be—a desirable residence for a gentleman; but then, the two cypresses, now the only trees in the front-garden, were not planted; the garden-gates stood where the blacksmith's forge and the butcher's shop stand now; and the bees gathered honey where drunken men now beat their wives, and lazy mothers scold their squalling children.

Dora Melford is alone in the dining-room of Beech House. She is still dressed in deep mourning for her brother; but it is sorrow and anxiety for the living, not grief for the dead, which have so changed her. An artist might still detect traces of former beauty, but not a careless observer; and many a dabbler in physiognomy would pronounce her to be a discontented, envious woman.

'I know what I would do myself,' thought Dora, as with crossed arms she walked slowly up and down the low, cheerless-looking room. 'I should tell him that it is plain to be seen he only wanted me for my money, and that I am well content to be poor, since my poverty saves me from becoming the wife of a fortune-hunter—Oh!' she exclaimed, with an impatient gesture, 'when will that blacksmith be quiet? Hammer, hammer, hammer!—it is enough to drive me mad.' She resumed her thoughts, still pacing up and down the room. 'I must speak to Grace. They can't go on for ever as they are doing now; her eyes must be opened some day—the sooner the better. Much good I shall do, however. Every month, we are further and further apart; and if I advise her to dismiss William, she will quite hate me.'

'Now, Dora, dear,' said Grace as she entered the room, 'put on your bonnet, and come with me.'

'Where are you going?'

'To buy one of the coffee-pots William was recommending,' Grace spoke with some appearance of hesitation and even shame.

Dora smiled contemptuously. 'You may save yourself the trouble, Grace; you'll not be able to use it to please him; and besides, we have no money to waste on such fancies.'

'Nay, Dora,' answered Grace, somewhat angrily, 'we are not so poor that we cannot spare a few shillings to satisfy our guests.'

'Well, you do not want me to help you to choose the coffee-pot, I suppose.'

'You had much better come with me,' said Grace. 'It would do you a great deal more good to walk in the open air than up and down this room. And why won't you dress yourself better? I declare, Dora, it is quite depressing to live with any one who is always moping, slovenly, and doing nothing. William says that you make him feel quite low-spirited.'

'Indeed!' exclaimed Dora; but as she looked up, the expression of her face became more amiable, and she answered differently to what she had at first intended, and in a gentler voice. 'I will tidy up the room, and dress myself, whilst you are out.'

Grace kissed her sister. 'That is a dear, good girl! I am sure, Dora, I am quite as sorry for poor Andrew's death as you can be; but you know it is not right to be always grieving for the dead. We owe something, dear Dora, to the living, and if—and here Grace looked entreatingly at her sister—'we were more cheerful, I think that perhaps William would come oftener than he does.'

'I will do my utmost, Grace, but'—

'I know that it is a miserable place,' interrupted Grace, as if anxious to prevent her sister's concluding her sentence—'very different from Prayton Park; but still, as we must live here, we may as well make the best of it.'

Grace also has altered during the last six months, but not so much as Dora, and what her face has lost in beauty it has gained in interest. She looks very delicate and ladylike in her black dress; even the rude men who live in Beech Street pity Grace, and will often cease their quarrelling and swearing as she passes. Scarcely any one feels kindly towards Dora; in losing her brother, she appears to have lost all that was most attractive in herself. Andrew had seen, and forced his sister to see, the bright side of everything; and it seemed to poor Dora as if the sun had ceased to shine since his death, and that she had buried even hope in his grave. The excitement that had supported her during his illness, and had enabled her to do without sleep for many nights together, and to watch him dying with outward calmness, had been followed by a reaction that was mental as well as physical.

When Squire Melford—as he liked to be called—purchased the Prayton estate, he was a bachelor, and intended to remain so. He was much attached to his brother, and entailed his estate first on his own male descendants, and then on his brother and his male descendants, always expecting his brother to inherit it. Squire Melford afterwards married, but from day to day delayed altering his will. 'I myself am good for a few years yet, I hope,' he would say; 'and I am sure Joseph will do right by the girls, if I should die unexpectedly. I don't approve of women having much money in their own power.' After his son's birth, he no longer considered that the will required altering. 'My son will, of course, make a home for his sisters until they have one of their own; and a home is all that girls want; they only get into mischief if they have too much money.' The utmost the easy old gentleman could be persuaded to do was to add a codicil to his will, giving Andrew the power to dispose of a portion of the estate as soon as he should be of age. But Andrew died before coming of age. Joseph had preceded him to the grave; and John

Melford, the heir-at-law, considered that whatever was legal was right. Grace and Dora were not left penniless; they inherited three thousand pounds, the house, and the street in which they lived, from their mother; but sometimes, when Dora had walked up and down one of the rooms of their new residence until fatigue produced positive pain, she would stand looking at the gloomy green of the cypress-trees, and wonder if it would not have been better to have lost all their fortune, instead of a part, and so to have been forced to work for a livelihood. She felt the noises of the street, the inconveniences of their new house, and the absence of the luxury and refinement to which they had been accustomed from childhood, far more than Grace did. 'If I had something to do,' she would say to herself, 'I should be better.' And she tried to work, but the work only made her more irritable than she was before. She blamed herself for her ill-temper; but every effort to be amiable was followed by a relapse. In truth, it was not work that she needed, but rest, quiet, a patient nurse, and a sympathising friend.

Mr Gordon came in the evening, and received a more cordial welcome from Dora than usual. 'I'm hardly fit to enter a lady's drawing-room,' he said, glancing, as he spoke, at a very dirty pair of boots.

'Oh, we are not such old maids as you take us for,' answered Grace cheerfully. 'Besides, I can provide you with clean feet.' She danced out of the room, and soon returned with a pair of worked slippers in her hand. 'My good fairy must have made you forget your clean boots,' she said, as she took off his dirty ones, and carried them into the kitchen to dry. He looked fondly at her as she thus waited on him, and Grace saw only his smile, but Dora thought: 'He could manage to enter the drawing-room at Prayton Park with clean boots, however muddy it might be, and he would not then have allowed Grace to do servant's work for him.'

Many of William's careless words and acts were magnified by Dora into intentional insults, and unperceived or ignored by Grace. The one girl could see only the bad side of his character; the other, only the good. Dora was right in supposing that he wished to break off his engagement, and indeed he was only prevented doing so by shame and pity; but Grace also was right in supposing that he loved her—loved her, that is, according to his nature.

'It is necessary for me to have money with my wife,' he would argue to himself, 'because I have scarcely any of my own. But I am not a mere fortune-hunter. I would not marry a woman I could not love, though she had a hundred thousand pounds.' In Grace Melford, of Prayton Park, he thought that he had found exactly the woman to suit him; and many a time did he strike his hand on the table, and stamp his foot on the ground, as he exclaimed: 'One more month—only one more month would have done it!' for he knew that if Andrew had lived to be of age, his sister's fortunes would have been very different from what they were. He was sorry to be obliged to part with Grace, but it never entered into his mind that she was worth working for: he did not care to remember how often he had told her that he wished she was as poor as himself, that he might be able to prove how much he loved her. No fault could ever be found with Mr Gordon's sentiments; the pity was that he did not act up to them. He had now an opportunity of playing a really noble part. He might have made a home for Grace, if not equal to that which she had been willing to leave for his sake, at least very superior to her present one; but to do so he must work—it came more natural to him to talk. He read *Lord Burleigh* to Grace—just as he used to read her *Locksley Hall*, when she lived at Prayton Park—and thought and told her that he wished he could take her into a splendid mansion, and say: 'All of this is mine and thine.'

'Grace!' said Dora one morning.

'Well?' inquired Grace, for Dora had stopped abruptly.

Dora had been walking about her room all night, preparing a conversation with her sister, but now she could think of no words to express what she wished to say. She was sitting on a stool before the fire, her right elbow resting on her knee, and her face on her hand, looking twelve years instead of twelve months older than the girl kneeling on the rug by her side. She took Grace's hand in hers: 'You'll forgive me, my darling, what I am going to say? You know how dearly I love you?'

Grace was silent; her heart beat quickly, and foreboded what was coming.

'If we saw a blind stranger walking into the river, should we not warn him? And shall I not warn you, Gracey, my own sister?' Dora approached nearer to Grace, and looked earnestly into her face, as she spoke; but Grace leaned back, and withdrew her hand. Many were the arguments that Dora had intended to urge, eloquent the exhortations she had prepared to persuade her sister to act as she considered it would be both wise and right for her to do; but now she had neither the power nor the desire to utter them. She only said: 'He does not love you, my darling; write and tell him he is free; and then Dora covered her face with her hands, and sobbed like a child.

Grace did not appear to notice her sister's tears—did not reflect how unusual it was for Dora thus to give way to her emotion. 'You always judged him harshly,' she said coldly. 'You always see the worst side of everything; Andrew used to say that you did.' 'But offer to give up the engagement, Grace, and if I am wrong, he will not accept the offer.'

'I can't,' said Grace, beginning to cry in her turn. 'If he does not love me quite so well just now, it is my fault—it is your fault, Dora. This is such a miserable place to come to. Why don't we leave off our black, and be more cheerful? O Dorry! dear Dorry! don't tell me to give him up—help me to win him back.'

What could Dora say? She only kissed and embraced her sister, and promised to do whatever she wished.

The next evening that William came, he was more courteous to Dora, and more affectionate to Grace, than he had been for some time; and he spoke of his marriage as an event for which he was becoming impatient. 'I must exert myself,' he said: 'other men make enough money to keep their wives—why should not I?' Grace looked triumphantly at her sister, and Dora smiled approvingly on William. She was willing enough to be proved in the wrong. The two sisters were very happy all that night; awake or asleep, they dreamed very pleasant dreams.

The next time William came, he said that he had brought good and bad news. 'I have a prospect of being able to make a home for my dear little Gracey; but I must leave her for a time. I am offered a very good situation at Lisbon. You would not mind living abroad for a few years, would you?'

'O no; she will not mind, William,' said Dora; and Grace smiled her answer.

'But you'll come too, Dora, will you not?'

'I'll just do what I'm wanted to do,' she answered, with a short hysterical laugh.

'O yes; come too, Dorry,' said Grace; 'we shall all be so happy!' and she looked fondly and, ah! so confidently, into her lover's face as she spoke.

He pressed her hand, with averted eyes, and turned towards Dora, as if expecting her to speak.

'If Andrew's spirit be with us to-day,' she said.

William started, looked over his shoulder, and then said, with a forced laugh, that he did not believe in apparitions.

'Nor do I,' answered Dora; 'but though we cannot



see him, he may be able to see us, or at least to know that you are faithful to his sister, William. I thought you a worse man than you are, but Grace has always done you justice; she has always fought your battles, William; but for the future she and I will be on the same side.'

'You pay me so many compliments, that you make me feel quite uncomfortable.'

'Then I will only tell Grace how well I think of you. She is always ready to receive flattery on your account. But—chattering old maid that I am—neither of you is listening to me! I will leave you alone; only remember, brother, that I depend upon your making me as useful as you can.'

Mr Gordon said that it was necessary for him to start at once for Lisbon, and he therefore bade the girls good-bye that evening. It was a very affectionate, but not a very sad farewell. It was arranged that Dora and Grace should join him, as soon as he considered it prudent for them to do so. 'You are the captain, and we the soldiers,' said Dora: 'only give your orders, captain, and we will obey;' and she made him a military salute. She was as ready to worship him, and to talk nonsense with him, as her sister.

'You see now that I did right not to follow your advice, Dorry,' said Grace as she wished Dora good-night.

'Quite right, quite right; and oh, how happy I feel.'

Dora joined Grace in her walks now, and the fresh air and exercise did her good; her health and spirits were both better. Though she had not the power some women have of building castles out of nothing, yet, give her a foundation on the earth, and she could run them up in the air as fast as any one; now that she had some reasonable ground for supposing William to be worthy of her sister, she equalled Grace in her expectations of the future.

William's first letter said that he had been greatly deceived in his situation; it was not nearly so good as he had expected it to be.

'Never mind, Gracey,' said Dora; 'you are both young, and can wait a while. Now he has proved that he really loves you, we must not be cast down by trifling difficulties.'

'I never doubted him,' answered Grace.

'No, my dear, and I will never doubt him again.'

The next letter was not to Grace, but to Dora, who read it more than once before she was sure that she understood it.

'DEAR DORA,' wrote William, 'I am most anxious to spare my darling Grace any unnecessary suffering; and so I trouble you with this letter, in order that you may break the bad news to her, as you can, I think, do so better by word of mouth than I could do by letter. I am so thoroughly prostrated by my present disappointment, that I dare not trust myself in a personal interview with her. I feel that I could not act as a man ought to act, were I to see her. You know how sincerely anxious I have long been for our marriage—how I was willing to give up my native country and the friends of my youth—in order to be able to call dear Grace my wife. But—it is useless to fight against fate—it was destined not to be. Grace is free to become the wife of a more fortunate man; and though I can never forget her, or love any other woman, I shall pray not only for her happiness, but also for his who gains her heart. Bid her farewell for me, and by so doing you will oblige your unfortunate, not unfaithful,

WILLIAM GORDON.'

'P.S.—I have destroyed Grace's letters, and I hope that you will use your influence to persuade her to destroy mine. If any one alludes to my engagement with your sister, I shall always leave it to be inferred that it was she who broke it off. I know that if she had been capable of following your judicious advice, she would have done so long ago.'

The letter had no address, but was stamped Paris.

Dora was still standing with the letter in her hand, staring stupidly at it, when she heard her sister's step on the stairs. She crushed the letter into her pocket, forcing her nails through it as she did so, and feeling at the moment towards the senseless paper as though it were a living enemy.

'I heard the postman, Dorry; did he bring me a letter?'

'No, my darling, there was no letter for you.' Dora looked down as she spoke, feeling very guilty.

At the same moment, Mr William Gordon was feeling far from happy. He knew that Dora would be about opening his letter, and he vividly pictured to himself the scornful expression of her countenance as she read it. 'Well,' he said to himself, 'it is done now, and it can't be undone. She ought to have let me off of her own accord. I don't think I would do it again; but what can't be cured, must be endured.' And then he confided his sublimated sentiments to Miss Purley, the pretty heiress, thereby gaining her admiration, and quieting his own not very troublesome conscience.

Grace was not one to foresee trouble before it actually came, and she laughed and talked all breakfast-time without once noticing her sister's altered manner. When at length the meal was finished, she proposed a walk, and on Dora's refusing to accompany her, said: 'Why, Dorry, you have got the mopes again. You ought not to be always so melancholy. I think, for my part, it is very wicked; yes, indeed, positively wicked, to be miserable when we have so much to be thankful for.' And after having administered the above lecture, she consented to take her walk alone.

Left to herself, Dora locked the door of her room, and read and re-read the letter, vainly hoping to discover a few words of comfort. Then she rested her elbows on the table, and pressed her hands against her forehead, and tried to think a way out of her trouble; and then she looked blankly out on the blue sky, and fell on her knees to pray such prayers as only those do pray whose sorrow is too deep for tears. Had Dora understood either herself or her sister better, she would have suffered far less than she did; but she fancied herself to be somewhat of a masculine character, with blunter feelings than women generally have, and Grace the very opposite. 'What should I even suffer,' she thought, 'if one whom I had loved and trusted had behaved to me as he has behaved to her. Oh, what a villain he must be, to use *her* so! My poor little Grace! The very ruffians of the street feel pity for you; and this wretch, this cold-blooded wretch, for whom you would gladly have died, casts you off in your misfortunes, and taunts you with your very love. Ah! it is better for women to be cold, hard-hearted things like I am. O God! why did you take our father from us! If he had lived, he would have protected her from this wretch, and then she might have loved some good man, and been a happy wife and mother. I daren't think of what she will suffer. God must comfort her, I cannot. I cannot even comprehend what she will feel: it would have driven me mad; what will become of her?'

Dora waited until her sister was in her own room; then she walked up and down the passage, one minute resolving to tell the evil tidings, and the next to leave the poor child yet a little longer respite. At length she opened her sister's door, and looked pitifully at her.

As Grace stood before the mirror, she saw the reflection of her sister's sad face. 'Why, Dorry, you ought— Is anything the matter?'

'I have received bad news, Gracey.'

'Bad news! not from William? Is he ill?'

'He is worse than ill, Grace. He is not worthy of you.'

'How dare you speak so, Dora?' exclaimed Grace indignantly. 'I will not live in the same house with you! I will go alone to him! You are one of those

mean, calculating women who care for nothing but money, and because he is not rich, you are always suspecting him of one thing or another. Be silent; I will not listen to another word. Dora, sometimes I could almost believe that you envy me his love.'

'My poor Grace'—

'Poor Grace, indeed! Why poor? unless it is for having so bad a sister'—

'You must read this. I would have prepared you for it; but'—

At sight of the well-known handwriting, Grace eagerly seized the letter. 'It is a forgery!' she exclaimed, but she did not put it away—she read it again and again. 'I'll not believe it. It is not true. Do you dare to say it is true?'

'I believe it,' answered Dora, in a very low voice. She had not the courage to raise her eyes, nay, she had hardly the power to do so; her lips were quite white, and she felt almost as helpless as though she were in a faint; but she was quite conscious. Every passionate exclamation that her sister uttered wrung her very soul, and, attempting to realise the agony that would have forced such words from herself, she multiplied it a thousandfold, and so tried to imagine what her sister was suffering.

Grace stamped her little foot on the ground, and tore the letter, declaring again and again that William had never written it. 'Or if he did, Dora, he can't mean it. He'll come in a day or two, and ask my forgiveness. Don't you think he will?' Dora, she exclaimed, in a raised voice, 'why don't you answer?'

'I am sure that he will never come again.'

'He will, he will; I tell you he will; and she threw herself crying on the bed.

'You have set him against me, Dora. You never wanted me to marry him. And there you sit, never saying one word, never caring one bit for all you have done. And oh! I am so miserable. I shall die! I shall die!' and the poor child wrung her hands, and looked piteously at her sister.

Dora seated herself by the side of the bed, and kissed, soothed, and listened to the complaining girl.

Suddenly Grace started up. 'Dora!'

'Yes, my darling; but don't look so!'

'Do you think he loves somebody else?'

'I don't know. Very likely not.'

'I could forgive him anything but that—— Do you think he would have married me if I had been rich?'

'Yes, indeed; I am sure he would.' And Dora wondered what comfort Grace could find in such a belief.

'Then he must have loved me better than other women, for there were plenty of rich girls besides me—— You won't leave me alone, Dorry?' she said, as it began to grow dark. 'I must have some one to talk to. You won't mind sitting up all night, will you?'

'No, indeed, my love; I will not leave you.'

A long dreary night did both the sisters pass; but when the day dawned, Grace was asleep, and Dora praying by her side.

Week after week did Grace alternately hope and despair. Not one word did she ever speak against her faithless lover. The postman's knock was never heard at the door, that she did not run to see if there was a letter for her from 'poor William,' as she always called him. She never appeared to be able to understand that he had done her any wrong; she had somehow managed to persuade herself that he no less than herself was the victim of unfortunate circumstances.

One day, Dora pointed out a curious advertisement to her sister. Grace took the *Times* listlessly, saying as she did so that it must be something very funny to make her laugh now; but as she was refolding the paper, her manner suddenly changed.

'Dora! Dora!' she exclaimed, 'he was in love with Ellen Purley!'

'Poor girl!' said Dora, as she read the announcement of William Gordon's marriage; 'she has got but a worthless husband, I fear. But his marriage cannot concern us, Grace.'

Without answering her sister, Grace walked up and down the room in angry agitation. 'The little designing hussy! I wish, oh! how I do wish that she may be thoroughly miserable.'

'Hush, Grace! you do not know what you are saying.'

'But I do,' she answered, suddenly standing still, and looking full at her sister. 'I do know what I am saying, and I mean it too. If Andrew were alive, I would make him horsewhip that scoundrel like a dog! I would like to see her a gray-haired old woman at thirty! I hope he'll gamble, and drink, and be faithless! I hope she'll grow ugly and cross, and'—— Dora put her hand before her sister's mouth. 'Let me speak, or I shall go mad!' and she pushed Dora away, and clenched her little fist, and struck it against the air.

Dora trembled as she gazed at her sister. The veins swelling on the smooth white forehead; the angry glances flashing from the usually soft gray eyes; the wild words bursting from the pretty little mouth—seemed to her more awful, than the oaths and curses of a drunkard. Utterly incapable of judging either herself or Grace correctly, she supposed that the passion she witnessed was more in accordance with her own character than with her sister's; and though unable to wish ill either to William or Ellen, she yet sympathised with the anger of her ill-used sister, for whom, now as ever, she felt the tenderest love and compassion.

'It is very easy for me,' she said to herself, 'to preach patience; but I am only a looker-on; I should no doubt feel very differently if I were the actual sufferer.' Suddenly a bright idea appeared to strike Grace; she nodded and ran up stairs. Dora followed her, but found that she had locked the door of her room.

'Go away, Dorry; I wish to be alone.'

'Thank God!' thought Dora. 'I knew little Grace could not be long angry. She is blaming herself for her wicked words; but it is William who ought to answer for them. She is praying; I too will go and pray. May God listen to our prayers, and send her peace.'

But Grace was far otherwise employed than her sister imagined. She opened a locked drawer, and with trembling hands collected all William's letters, tied them together in a parcel, and directed them to Mrs William Gordon. 'I did well not to destroy them,' she muttered. 'You thought, William, that I had no one to revenge me, but I can revenge myself. How will you look, my pretty bride, when you read these letters?' When the parcel was sealed and directed, she put it in her pocket, and then dressed to go out.

Dora heard the street-door shut, and running to the window, saw her sister walking at a rapid pace up the street. Hastily tying on her bonnet, and throwing a shawl over her shoulders, she followed; but when she reached the top of Beech Street, her sister was already out of sight; and Dora had foolishly neglected to notice which way she had turned. A horrible idea crossed Dora's mind, and she ran, or rather flew in the direction of the canal; but she could see nothing of Grace. 'Careless guardian that I am! How could I leave her alone at such a moment! A hundred improbabilities appeared to her the most natural occurrences in the world. When she had vainly sought for Grace in every direction, she returned home, and found her sister walking up and down the dining-room.

'O Grace, how could you frighten me so?' she



exclaimed reproachfully, with the hysterical laugh that so often broke from her in moments of unexpected joy. 'Where have you been, child? Why did you not tell me you were going out? I would have come with you.'

'I don't think you would, Dora,' said Grace quietly.

'Then where have you been?' asked Dora, and her heart sank, she knew not why, for was not Grace standing alive before her, and looking far more composed than when last they parted.

'I have been posting William's letters to his wife.'

'You have'—Dora stopped abruptly, and looked anxiously at her sister.

'I have,' repeated Grace, 'sent William's letters to his wife. He will learn that, though poor and friendless, I am not to be played with, and then flung on one side, like a servant-wench.'

'O Grace, you don't know what you have done.'

'At all events, I have done it, and it can't be undone,' and she smiled triumphantly as she spoke.

'No,' thought Dora, 'it can't be undone. My poor little Grace; she is beside herself. O God, have mercy on her! If wicked men could see all the sin and misery they cause, surely their earth would be as bad as hell.'

Nothing more was said about the letters. Grace fetched her work, and tried to talk on everyday topics, and to appear merry. But Dora watched the little trembling hands, and listened to the forced laugh coming from the white lips, with sinking heart. At length she took her sister's work from her. 'See, my darling, you cannot guide your needle; you have made your fingers bleed.'

'The blood comes from here, Dorry,' she answered, laughing and pointing to her heart as she spoke. Then her arms fell at her sides, and leaning back, she looked up with an expression of such utter despair, as poor Dora had never before seen on any human face.

'My darling, my darling,' was all that she could say, but she kissed her sister's burning forehead and parched lips.

'Don't talk, please,' said Grace very gently; then catching hold of her sister's dress, she added in a more excited tone: 'But you mustn't leave me; you'll not get another sister instead of me, will you?'

'No, my love; we will always be together.'

'Ah, yes, always keep with me, Dorry, for those words you know, those horrid words, won't go out of my head.'

'What words, Gracey?'

'"Anywhere, anywhere out of the world."'

It was Dora's turn to weep now. Grace's eyes were quite dry, and sparkling with a fever-like brightness. Dora stayed with her sister all day, saying little, but soothing her, as best she could, with looks and caresses. Towards evening, she persuaded her to lie down, and, worn out with the excitement of the day, her eyes closed, and she tossed in a restless sleep that was only half unconscious. Dora stole softly out of her sister's room, and making the servant take off her shoes, and promise not to leave the mat by Miss Grace's half-open door until she returned from the chemist's, went out. She was back and sitting by the side of the bed before Grace awoke from her unrefreshing slumber.

Grace had no illness, at least none that required more than a change of scene and Dora's gentle doctoring. The two girls took a cheap lodging at Dartmouth; and the pretty scenery and perfect quiet of the river-banks did far more for Grace than the most skillful physician or the most exciting foreign tour could have done. An old boatman, who had passed his life in the little village, rowed them about, shewed them the most beautiful spots, and pointed out the numerous yachts as they arrived. Yachters are nearly the only travellers who visit Dartmouth; and the residents are so countrified, that they please

a Londoner almost as much as the scenery. After living so long in dusty, noisy Subridge, it was very pleasant to Dora and Grace to sit in the meadows, by the side of the river, and watch the boats, often rowed by women, going silently up and down; or to walk through the quiet market, supplied by the wives and daughters of the small farmers in the neighbourhood, who ride in on extraordinarily rough ponies, and after they have sold their goods, walk through the village, and gossip with their friends.

Lazy speculations about the lives and characters of the country people with whom they came in contact, and their own trivial adventures as housekeepers—such as being obliged to wait for their breakfast on a Monday, because a favourable wind having sprung up all the yachts had started early in the morning, and cleared the bakers' shops before doing so—formed the usual subjects of the sisters' conversation. Dora never tried to amuse Grace, except with trifles; she knew by experience that after a great sorrow the mind needs rest, not excitement. And Grace was not ungrateful for her sister's sympathy; she shewed her gratitude by often trying to appear more contented than she really was, and by a thousand acts and words too trivial to be mentioned. There was but one subject on which the sisters could not agree—William's letters. Dora would sometimes ask Grace if she were not sorry that she had sent them, but Grace always denied that she regretted having done so, and then she would turn away, to avoid seeing her sister's look of disappointment. And Dora would think: 'Others might blame Grace, but I know, and God knows, who is the real sinner. It was the very intensity of her love that taught her to hate; and great indeed must be his sin who changed so sweet and gentle a nature as hers.'

One day the old boatman pointed out a newly arrived yacht called the *Ellen*.

'She looks a very handsome one. To whom does she belong?'

The man did not recollect the name of the proprietor; but he had evidently something to tell about him. The girls smiled at each other, and silently agreed to ask no questions. By and by, the old man wondered that he didn't remember the name of the gentleman, as he had more reason to remember it than that of most of the yachters. Still Dora and Grace were silent. The boatman gave a few more hints, in hopes of exciting their curiosity, and then told his piece of scandal without more ado. The yacht was a pretty enough little creature, but he doubted if the gentlefolks she belonged to were as happy as he and his old woman. They had only been married a few months; and last night the husband had slept at the inn, and the wife on board the yacht.

'I daresay,' said Dora smiling, 'the gentleman is only like me, and prefers a bedroom to a cabin.'

But the old man shook his head, and said that the yacht-sailors knew better: they often heard their master and mistress quarrelling, and knew that the lady always got the best of it, because the purse belonged to her, and she took good care to keep it.

'Well,' said Dora, 'tell us something else; we do not care to hear about quarrels.'

'No, very likely not; but if the young lady had not spoken just then, he should have remembered the gentleman's name; for he had heard it, and he thought, to be sure, he could have remembered it by something that belonged to himself, but what, he could not think. He rowed on deep in thought, the girls laughing as they watched him evidently going through the inventory of his belongings, sometimes to himself, and sometimes half-aloud. 'Kittle—tittle—no, it warn't that.' A long silence. 'Dish—pish, lish—no, it warn't that.' Another long silence, followed by a sudden gleam of intelligence. 'Lord-a-mercy me! to think as I should ever ha' been so silly—it war garden—garden, war it. Leastways, my garden

is what I remembers by; but I arn't got the name yet.'

'Look, Grace, what a pretty church! let us be landed here. Put us on shore, James: I'm tired of sitting.'

The old man obeyed, and as he handed Dora out, exclaimed triumphantly: 'It war Gordon! I knowed I couldn't forget it.'

Dora joined her sister, who had walked slowly on; but neither spoke for a while.

'The yachts never remain long, Grace; we will stay at home till he is gone.'

Grace walked on in silence.

'Here is a pleasant seat; let us sit down and look about us;' and as they rested, Dora took her sister's hand in hers, and played with it, looking fondly at her the while.

'Do you think it is my doing, Dorry?'

'Would you wish it to be so?'

'Oh, I should not mind anything, if only I had not sent those letters!' She looked up eagerly at the sound of Dora's half-crying laugh.

'They are safe at home in my desk. Whilst you were asleep, I ran to the post-office, and got them back. It was rather a troublesome business; but I scolded, and begged, and threatened, and cried, until I think the man was half-frightened out of his senses; and with many protests that it wasn't right, and that he should lose his situation if he were found out, he gave them to me; and, Grace, I hardly touched the ground as I ran home, I was so afraid that he would be after me.'

From that time, Grace's health steadily improved, until there was no longer any excuse for remaining at Dartmouth. The noisy, dusty town of Subridge did not strike the girls very favourably after the quiet little seaport of Dartmouth; but the house in which they lived was not easily to be let, and they could not afford to pay rent for another whilst their own stood empty. They both resolved to make the best of what could not be helped, and to be cheerful because it was their duty to be so. But to be happy because it is one's duty to be happy, is very uphill work, and each often found herself breaking her good resolutions, and grieving for Andrew, Prayton Park, and all the castles in the air she had built when there; and the constant exertion which each thought it a point of honour to make to appear in good spirits, did not perhaps make her feel the less depressed. One day, they read Mrs William Gordon's name amongst the deaths, she having died with her first child. 'Poor girl,' said Grace; 'that must be a very hard death to die!' She was silent for a few minutes, and then continued: 'But I doubt if her married life has been at all happy. I was very silly, Dorry, when I would have left you for him. One such sister as mine is worth a hundred such lovers as William Gordon.'

Not long after Mrs Gordon's death, Grace received the following letter from the widower.

'DEAR GRACE—You will wonder at receiving a letter from me. Will you be angry? I think not. I believe I know the sweet, forgiving disposition of her whom I once hoped to call mine—the only woman I ever loved. Yes, Grace, as I lie on this bed, from which I shall never more rise, my heart turns to my first and last love, and I take this pen in my dying hand to pray for her forgiveness. I have not many more weeks to live, and would fain have passed my few remaining days in my native land, and in the society of the two who are most dear to me. But I was born under an unlucky star, and it is not to be. My friends and physicians tell me that it is my duty to seek a warmer climate on the chance of prolonging my life, for the sake of my son. My son! Yes, I am a father, and it is that alone which makes death bitter. To whom shall I leave my little one? There is one, and one only, to whom I would willingly intrust him. Will you make my few remaining hours

happy? Will you, in remembrance of the love you once bore me—will you be a mother to my orphan son? Yes; my own heart answers for yours; you will not be deaf to your William's last prayer. My son is not named after his unhappy father, but after his father's best and dearest friend, Andrew Melford. May he resemble him whose name he bears! Owing to the extravagance of my poor wife—of whose faults, however, I would speak lightly, she being no more—my son will not inherit such a fortune as I could have desired; but he will be a far richer, and, I trust, a far better man than his father. To-morrow I leave England to die amidst strangers, and to be buried in a foreign land. That God may watch over you and my son, will be the last prayer of your broken-hearted

WILLIAM GORDON.'

Did the writer really believe that he was dying when he wrote the above? Those who knew him best judged that he did not; that he purposed going abroad, and wished to be free of his son. Certainly, he had become more and more selfish and untruthful from the time that he broke his engagement with Grace. Indeed, some said that they doubted if he himself knew when he was speaking truth, and when falsehood; so, perhaps, he had persuaded himself that he really felt what he wrote. His letter reached Grace enclosed in another, which informed her that Mr William Gordon had been for some time delicate, though not seriously ill, but that, in getting out of his carriage, he had fallen, struck his head against a curb-stone, and died almost immediately. The writer wished to know if Miss Grace Melford were willing to take charge of the child.

Grace burned her faithless lover's letter, and granted his last request.

The presence of the little baby, who crowed and kicked because he was happy, and not because it was his duty to do so, effected wonders. He required both Dora's and Grace's constant care, and thus forced them to think of the present instead of the past. Dora's mind has recovered its former vigour, that of Grace its former hopefulness. They are no longer afraid of the future; they trust that when they are old women, little Andy will repay the care they are now taking of him. It would not do, they thought, to let him grow up without the society of other children, and in making friends for him, they have found some for themselves. Beech Street and Beech House are much altered. When Dora had leisure and inclination to look into the little estate, she found that it was capable of great improvement, that if the houses on each side of the street were let to tenants who regularly paid their rent, she and her sister would be much better off than they were. Two thousand pounds judiciously expended have not only brought a good return in money, but in comfort also. The butcher's shop and the blacksmith's forge are altered, and let, the one to a baker, and the other to a chemist, which gives to the street a more respectable appearance. The rest of the houses are repaired, and let to well-conducted though humble tenants. Beech House is still occupied by its landladies, but it is so much admired, that a tenant could easily be found. Grace and Dora, however, have no desire to move; they have become attached to the once dreary house, and the dusty, noisy town. The two cypress-trees are cut down, and many beautiful flowers have taken their place. Roses, red, yellow, and white, creep up the front of the house, and are trained to form blinds over the lower panes of the dining and drawing room windows, which, when the roses are budding, are considered one of the sights of Subridge. Within, the house is no longer dark: windows have been made in the back wall; and the square garden they look over is now a very pretty object, for cabbages, potatoes, and weeds are no longer allowed there. Grace looks as pretty, as ladylike, I had almost said as young, as when first we knew her.

Dora's hair is beginning to turn gray, but she has every appearance of being a very happy woman. The child is a generous, affectionate little boy. Dora and Grace think that he is somewhat like their brother; but as he will probably have a more judicious education, and fewer temptations, it may be hoped that he will be a wiser and a happier man than poor Andrew.

#### LETTER-OPENING AT THE GENERAL POST-OFFICE.

It will be fresh in the memory of most readers that the year 1844 revealed to the public certain usages of the government which went far to destroy the confidence of the nation in respect to the sanctity of its correspondence. In that year, the letters of M. Mazzini, residing at that time at 47 Devonshire Street, Queen's Square, were known to have been opened at the General Post-office, under a warrant from the then Home Secretary, Sir James Graham, and copies of these letters were forwarded, through our Foreign Office, to certain foreign governments. Through the length and breadth of the land, the public indignation was extreme. The Home Secretary especially, but, to some extent, all the other members of the government, came in for a large amount of censure. The practice, when the details of it burst upon the public mind, was considered a national disgrace; the circumstances of the particular occurrence which led to an exposure of the practice was of the very nature to rouse and fire the public mind. Mazzini's letters revealed the plan of operations of certain down-trodden peoples, then struggling for the liberties which they have subsequently obtained; the measures of the government had the effect of turning our English post-office, so lately itself enfranchised, into a Holy Alliance Intelligence Office for the particular accommodation of certain miserable little Italian despots; and the ultimate consequences of the letter-opening were numerous additions to the martyrs of Italian liberty. Mr Thomas Duncombe presented a petition from M. Mazzini in the early part of the session of 1844, and prayed for an inquiry. So great was the public indignation, that though Sir Robert Peel was in full command of an obedient parliament, it was impossible to refuse the committee. Committees of both Houses were accordingly appointed 'to inquire into the state of the law in respect to opening and detaining of letters at the General Post-office.' Duncombe was excluded from the committee of the Lower House, and Mazzini and his witnesses were not heard.

Of the power of the government to open and examine the correspondence of suspected persons, there can be no question. Though sanctioned by law, it must be condemned, however, except in rare and extreme cases. The fact of its being strictly legal to open M. Mazzini's letters, does not recommend the practice to the English people. As we may infer from the wording of the motion authorising the inquiry, precedents were sought by the committee, and found in great abundance, for opening and detaining letters. During the early periods of the history of the post-office, and when the institution was regarded as exclusively a government monopoly, there can be no wonder that such an arrangement existed; but that such a system of espionage should continue under new and happier auspices, and under an improved régime, is strange and repulsive.

During the Commonwealth, of course, letter-opening was to be expected. The very reason which Cromwell gave for establishing the posts was, that 'they would be the best means of discovering and preventing many wicked designs against the Commonwealth.' Foreign and home letters shared an

equal fate. On one occasion, the Venetian ambassador remonstrated openly that his letters had been delayed and read, and it was not denied. At the Restoration, under Charles's act, it is made a distinct clause that 'no one, except under the immediate warrant of one of our principal Secretaries of State, shall presume to open any letters or packets not directed unto themselves.'

Under the improved act of Queen Anne, 1711, it is again stated that 'no person or persons shall presume to open, detain, or delay any letter or letters, after the same is or shall be delivered into the general or any other post-office, and before delivery to the persons to whom they are addressed, except by an express warrant in writing under the hand of one of the principal Secretaries of State for every such opening, detaining, or delaying.' This act remains in force to this day. During the eighteenth century, the practice of granting warrants was exceedingly common. As no record whatever remains of the warrants themselves, we can only guess at their number from the frequent mention made of them in the state trials of the period. In 1723, at Bishop Atterbury's trial, copies of his letters which passed through the post-office were adduced in evidence against him, such copies being sworn to by a clerk from the General Post-office, who had seen the original letters opened and read at the post-office. In 1735, several members of parliament complained that their letters had been opened. The House declared such an act, for whatever purpose it was done, a breach of privilege. From circumstances which came out during the investigation, it seems evident that the Secretary of State at this period often lent himself in this matter to further cases of private tyranny.

Thus Walpole, who doubtless carried his prerogative in these matters beyond any other two Secretaries of State we could mention, granted a private warrant in 1741, for what purpose may be judged by the following: 'At the request of A, a warrant was issued to permit A's eldest son to open and inspect any letters which A's youngest son might write to two females, one of which that youngest son had imprudently married.'

In 1806, the government saw the necessity of placing some check on the indiscriminate issue of these warrants. Lord Spencer, the Home Secretary at that time, introduced the custom of recording the dates of the warrants and the purposes for which they were issued. Since the year 1822, the whole of the warrants themselves have been preserved at the Home Office. In comparing the number of warrants issued by different Home Secretaries during the present century, we find that Sir James Graham enjoys the unenviable notoriety of having issued the greatest number, though the fact is partly explained by the commotion which the Chartists made in the north of England, 1842-3. Whilst the whole history of the transactions in question grate unpleasantly on English ears, there can be no doubt that in some cases, such as frauds on the banks or the revenue, forgeries, murders, &c., the power of opening letters was used impartially to the advantage of individuals and the benefit of the state. Whether, however, the discoveries and the benefits were so many and so great as to counterbalance the public crime of violating public confidence and perpetuating an official immorality, or whether the issue of a few warrants annually, in proportion to an average of nearly 40,000 committals which took place yearly about that period, could by any means be called an efficient instrument of police, are vastly different questions.

The committee of inquiry classed the warrants issued during the present century in the following way: for thefts, murders, fraud, 162; for treason and sedition, 77; foreign correspondence, 20; prisoners of war, 13; miscellaneous and uncertain, 100.

Undoubtedly, with the class of letters suspected of



containing treasonable correspondence, the government had good and sufficient grounds for applying the law recognised even so late as the 1 Vict. c. 33. The information obtained by these means to find the *locule* of Chartist disaffection, was regarded as valuable, and gave the government, in the words of the committee, 'better information as to the dangers apprehended in particular districts than would be derived from local observation, or than might be collected from the vague and exaggerated rumours which in periods of disturbance very usually prevail.'

The English public, however, objected less to the power which the government possessed in the exercise of their discretion over the letters passing through the post-office, than to the *manner* in which that power was exercised. Had the officers of the government broken open letters in the same way as the law directs the sheriff's officer under certain circumstances to break open houses and writing-desks, there might still have been complainings, but complainings which would neither have been so loud nor so justifiable. There was something in the melting apparatus and the forged plaster of Paris seals utterly repugnant to John Bull. The late secret office in the General Post-office was the place where all this dirty work was done. Let the reader imagine a low, small windowless apartment; it is lighted with gas, and looks altogether very well designed for the business it is meant for. In this room, reached by a secret staircase, the official letter-picker plied his odious calling. Some unfortunate is suspected: a bag arriving from a certain place, or about to be despatched hence, is quietly taken, perhaps along with other bags, as a blind to the hundreds of officers working away in the General Post-office, and ignorant of the den upstairs, to the secret operator. The letters intended for operation are quickly selected; the seals attached to them are narrowly scrutinised; perhaps there are copies of many of them on some of the bunches of seals on hand; if not, a fac-simile is soon taken either in bread or plaster of Paris before the letter is tampered with. A piece of a tobacco-pipe is generally the dignified instrument used, under the authority of the first government of modern times, for the remaining operation. It is made red hot, and the wax of the letter is quickly melted by the operator blowing a hot blast on the letter through the pipe. When opened, the letter is immediately read, copied, if it be the one in which he has been in search, then resealed, and forwarded as addressed, apparently inviolate.

The revelations made with respect to foreign correspondence, especially that of foreign ministers resident at the English court, was still more astounding, and still less excusable. Whole foreign mails were at times detained, and in times of war especially, the letters individually examined. The Lords' Committee even went so far as to report that it was clear 'that it had been for a long period of time, and under successive administrations, up to the present time, an established practice that the foreign correspondence of foreign ministers passing through the General Post-office should be sent to a department of the Foreign Office, before the forwarding of such correspondence according to the address.' We may imagine the feelings of foreign powers at this revelation. Of course, they knew that the English government had not scrupled some few hundred years ago to open their letters if they could get hold of them; for instance, when Wolsey wanted to get possession of the letters of the ambassador of Charles V., he did so openly, and ordered 'a pryvie watche should be made' in and about London, and all persons going *en route* to the continent to be questioned and searched. 'One riding towards Brayneford, examyned by the watche, answered so closely, that upon suspicion thereof, they searched hym, and found secretly hyd aboutes hym a little pacquet of letters in French.' In the reign of Queen Mary, Gardiner ordered that

the messengers of Noailles, the French ambassador, should be taken and searched in much the same manner. Later governments preferred more secret measures, and established, it would seem, a system of espionage hateful to the English public, and dangerous to the peace of Europe. That the arrangement with regard to foreign correspondence was unlawful may be judged by the prompt action which was taken in the matter. 'Since June 1844, the Postmaster-general,' in the words of the report of the Lords' Committee, August of the same year, 'having had his attention called to the fact, that there was no sufficient authority for this practice, has discontinued it altogether.' With regard to the general question of letter-opening, the issue was vague and uncertain. Though the *practical* end of the inquiry was no doubt gained, and warrants are seldom if ever granted now, still the committee recommended parliament to decide that the power and prerogative of opening letters, under certain circumstances, should *not* be abrogated. They argued, that if the *right* of the Secretary of State were denied, it would be equivalent to advertising to every criminal conspirator against the public peace that he might employ the post-office with impunity. The law therefore remains unaltered, but for all essential purposes, it is, and it is to be hoped, will always remain quite inoperative.

The Dead-letter Office, rendered necessary by the carelessness of letter-writers themselves, has to some extent taken the place of the secret office of twenty years ago. It is now a considerable establishment, employing twenty officers more than under the old system of postage. Last year, considerably over two millions of letters were returned to the writers through the Dead-letter Office, from failure in the attempts to deliver them. 'Three-quarters of the non-deliveries,' says the postmaster-general, 'were on account of the letters being insufficiently or incorrectly addressed, nearly eleven thousand letters having been posted without any address at all.'

In every provincial office in the kingdom, a 'dead-letter bag' is now forwarded daily to the metropolitan office of their respective counties, containing the letters in question. No time is lost in opening the bags. By an arrangement of ten years' standing, if the returned letter has the writer's name and address engraved on the seal, or written or printed on the outside, it will *not* be opened at all, but forwarded back according to this address. This arrangement, which is a most satisfactory one, has sometimes led to mistake and confusion, however, and the postmaster-general in his last Report appeals to the public on the subject. It would seem that a practice is on the increase of using envelopes bearing another person's name and address than the writer's, embossed on an adhesive seal. When such a letter, according to the arrangement, is forwarded to the supposed writer, it has frequently fallen into the wrong hands, and grievous complaints have been made concerning it. If there are no outward marks of the kind, the letter is of course opened, and if any likely address is found within, it is at once forwarded thereto. If the letter contains anything of value, such as bank-notes, drafts, or postage-stamps, the precaution is taken of having it registered. Money to the value of about £12,000 per annum is found in these returned letters. Of this sum, about £500 falls into the exchequer annually, on account of no address being found inside, and no inquiry being made for the missing letters. A vast number of bank post bills and bills of exchange are likewise found in these 'dead-letters,' amounting on the average to nearly three millions of pounds a year. As in nearly all cases, however, they are duplicates, and of only nominal value, they are destroyed, with the permission of the owners. Forty thousand letters reach the Dead-letter Office each year containing property of different kinds. With

jewellery—such as rings, pins, and brooches—letters are frequently not sent at all, and it is therefore seldom returned, but sold to the jeweller. The mass of miscellaneous articles, principally lace, gloves, and handkerchiefs, are put up and sold by auction in the office.

### THE CHEAPEST CAPITAL IN EUROPE.

In the summer of the year 1859, I was staying for a short time at Dresden, partly in order to revisit its magnificent picture-gallery, but principally with a view of making a walking-tour through the so-called Saxon Switzerland, upon the arrival of two of my friends. One exceedingly hot afternoon, after spending some time upon the Brühler Terrace, smoking cigars, gazing dreamily at the beautiful prospect, and silently comparing the clear blue water of the Elbe with that of the Thames at London Bridge, I suddenly discovered that the heat and dust had made me extremely thirsty, so I sauntered slowly off to a café at no great distance, to refresh myself with a glass of the celebrated Waldschlösschen beer, so called from the place at which it is brewed, in the immediate neighbourhood of Dresden.

When I entered the café I found half-a-dozen stout red-faced personages seated at one of the tables, discussing beer, and, as usual at that time, the Italian question; for the war in Italy between the French and Austrians being at its height, it was, wherever one went, the invariable theme of conversation. I sat down near these gentlemen, and took part in the conversation, which presently turned from Italian affairs to Austria in general, and afterwards to Vienna in particular, about which city there seemed to be but one opinion, for all the stout personages declared with one accord that it was, without exception, the dearest place upon the face of the earth. At hearing this, a short, plump, good-natured-looking individual who had entered the café a few minutes before, and was sitting at a table at no great distance from us, suddenly looked out of his beer-glass, and exclaimed: 'I really beg your pardon, gentlemen, but I think that there are just now very few places in which one can live so cheaply as in Vienna, if one only knows how to manage. I spent about a month there very lately, and I assure you that, although I lived very well, my whole expenses did not amount to more than twenty dollars (three pounds). Vienna is the cheapest capital in Europe.'

'Impossible!' said several of us at once.

'Well, then,' said he, as he took up his half-empty glass and moved to our table, 'I must try to convince you that it is possible, by telling you how I managed it myself, and how any of you may easily do so too, if you think fit to make the attempt. In case you should do so, I should recommend you to take as little luggage as possible with you: one suit of clothes, which, however, ought to be a very strong one, will be quite sufficient; but you should be provided with several hats, or, still better, caps, as these particular articles of dress are very liable to get lost or spoiled in Vienna. I arrived at that city about dusk one evening at the beginning of last month, and went straight from the railway station to the White Horse Hotel, which had been recommended to me, and where I got a very good bedroom and sitting-room upon the second floor'—

'My dear sir,' interrupted one of the party, 'excuse me, but I know the hotel of which you speak very well, and I am perfectly certain that your lodgings alone in that hotel would cost you more than twenty dollars a month.'

'Really, sir,' answered the narrator, 'I shall be a very long while before I get to the end of my story, if I am thus interrupted. If you will only be patient, and listen quietly to me for a few minutes, I will shew you that lodgings are not nearly so expensive

as you suppose, if one really wishes to live cheaply. As I was saying, I went to the White Horse, which I found to be, as this gentleman says, a very excellent hotel. As I was rather tired, for I had been travelling all day, I did not go out that evening, but after partaking of a capital supper, and smoking a cigar, I went early to bed, and slept very soundly; so soundly, indeed, that it was nearly ten o'clock in the morning before I descended to the *salle-a-manger*, where I was soon occupied with a breakfast in no way inferior to the supper which I had discussed with so much satisfaction on the previous evening. After breakfast, I lighted a cigar, and strolled lazily about the streets, now and then refreshing myself with a glass of beer, which, by the by, is not nearly so good as our Waldschlösschen beer, as I can assure you, gentlemen.—Kellner, bringen Sie mir noch ein Glas Bier.'

He remained silent until the beer was brought, when he took a long draught, and then continued: 'I got rid of the time in this way until about five o'clock, when I directed my steps towards the hotel where I had determined to dine, as I had heard so much of the excellence of its *table-d'hôte* and the purity of its wines. The dinner itself far surpassed my expectation; it was indeed a sumptuous meal, lasting more than two hours, and including all the delicacies of the season. After dinner, most of the guests left the room; only six or seven remained, who appeared to have indulged so freely in the pleasures of the table, that they were not inclined for locomotion, and therefore ordered coffee to be served for them at one of the smaller tables. I noticed this, and immediately determined upon my plan of operations. I quietly laid down the bill, which had just been presented to me by a waiter, by the side of my plate, and ordered coffee for myself also, telling the waiter to serve it at the same table at which the other gentlemen were sitting. As soon as my coffee was served, I joined the other coffee-drinkers at their table, and found, as I expected, that their conversation was upon the subject of the war in Italy. My companions were all Austrians, and they very naturally pronounced the Emperor of the French to be a monster of iniquity, the very incarnation of injustice. I, for my part, took the opposite view of the question, and defended the French policy, at which they got gradually very angry; but their indignation knew no bounds when, after eulogising the French emperor for nearly five minutes, I wound up by asserting that Louis Napoleon was nobler, more talented, and endowed with a higher sense of justice than any potentate in the world. They were beside themselves with fury; they started up, seized me by the collar, dragged me to the door, and finally threw me right out into the street; whilst I, of course, as soon as I could collect myself, lost no time in making my escape from such a dangerous locality. Who paid my bill, I really cannot tell: I am sorry to say that I did not; but you know, gentlemen, that self-preservation is the first object; and you see that I should only have exposed myself to further ill-treatment, had I ventured into the house again.

'I supped at another hotel in the same luxurious and inexpensive manner, and in this way found that Vienna is by no means so dear a place as is generally thought. My dinner and supper never cost me anything, as the conversation, in which I took care to take a prominent part, was invariably upon the subject of the Italian war, and I always adopted the French side of the question, concluding my remarks with the assertion, that Louis Napoleon was nobler, more talented, and endowed with a higher sense of justice than any potentate in the world; upon which I was always seized and kicked into the street, without having any time allowed me to pay for what I had consumed.

'Look, gentlemen, at this beautifully carved meers-

schaum cigar-holder—do you know that the value of this is fifteen florins, and that I did not pay one half-penny for it? Yet this is really true. My attention was attracted one day as I was lounging in the street by a shop-window, in which a great number of meerschäum pipes and cigar-holders of exquisite workmanship were exposed for sale. After examining them for a short time through the window, I looked through the door into the shop, and saw, to my great disgust, that a young lady was seated behind the counter, in readiness to serve any purchaser who might chance to enter. This, of course, would not have suited my purpose, so I reluctantly passed on; but it fortunately occurred to me that I had seen another shop in a different part of the town, where equally beautiful pipes and cigar-holders were to be had, and in which I had remarked a man of gigantic stature and ferocious aspect. I walked to the shop, and looked through the window—yes, there he was again, smoking a huge cigar, and reading a newspaper, with an expression of face which shewed that he was not highly delighted with the news contained therein. I entered the shop, and requested him to shew me some meerschäum cigar-holders, upon which he laid down his newspaper, and very sulkily produced a number for my inspection, muttering something all the while, of which I could only distinguish the words “those cursed Frenchmen.” I selected this cigar-holder, stuck my cigar quietly into it, and continued to smoke, taking up his newspaper, as if by accident. I cast my eyes upon it, pretended to start violently, and exclaimed: “Ah, indeed! another Austrian defeat! Dear me, how unlucky your generals seem to be.”

“Unlucky? *Donnerwetter!* yes,” said he; “that infamous Emperor of the French has all the luck upon his side.”

“I beg your pardon, my good man,” I replied; “infamous he certainly is not; and he is a man of very unusual talent.”

“The argument was now fairly engaged in; it went through the usual phases; and, as I expected, upon my final assertion, that Louis Napoleon was nobler, more talented, and endowed with a higher sense of justice than any potentate in the world, he threw down his cigar, jumped over the counter, seized me by the throat, and after shaking me as a terrier does a rat, pushed me out into the street, when I, as usual, got out of the way as quickly as possible, leaving him no time to cool down, and then perhaps remember that I had omitted to pay for my cigar-holder.

“I went on in this way for more than a fortnight, dining, supping, and occasionally making small purchases at the expense of I really do not know whom, till at last, one evening after supper, just as I had concluded on the usual subject in the usual manner, and had been, as usual, forcibly ejected, two men, whom I remembered having seen in the hotel, seized me by the collar, informed me that they were officers of the royal and imperial police force, and took me off to the station-house. There I passed a very uncomfortable night, upon a wooden bed, in company with three pickpockets, and two men who had been arrested for being drunk and disorderly. The next morning, I was taken before a magistrate, who, after cross-examining me for nearly an hour, ordered me off to prison, where I was kept in durance vile for about ten days, and then forwarded, escorted by two *gens d’armes*, across the frontier; in a third-class carriage, certainly, but still at the expense of the Austrian government, who, I suppose, paid my bill at the White Horse, for I had no opportunity of doing so myself. As soon as I was out of the hands of the *gens d’armes*, I made the best of my way home, and arrived here only about twenty dollars poorer than when I left, a month before.

“You are now, I hope, gentlemen, convinced that

Vienna is by no means the ruinously expensive place which it is generally supposed to be; and you will also see why I recommended you to take no luggage with you, and to provide yourselves with several hats or caps, as these are very liable to be damaged or lost, if you are in the habit of being kicked out of people’s houses.”

We all laughed heartily at our short friend’s method of living cheaply; and I, for my own part, returned to my hotel with the pleasant consciousness of having learned something that afternoon, and fully convinced, by the short gentleman’s arguments, that Vienna is, when scientifically handled, by no means a dear place, but, to use his own words, ‘the cheapest capital in Europe.’

## RUSSIAN JOTTINGS.

### SECOND ARTICLE.

It is very difficult to analyse the character of the Russians, since the people are a compound of so many races, and it is only at a comparatively recent date that they have become civilised. You will sometimes find Russians of the highest polish having the vices of barbarians; but, on the whole, the national character is estimable. To give our readers an insight into the character of the true Russians, we do not think we can do better than quote from Golovine’s work. He is a Russian, an acute observer, and cannot be accused of partiality. He says: ‘The Russian is naturally good and mild, more so than other nations. He still retains something of his primitive barbarism, as he has already borrowed some of the defects of modern civilisation. A bad, and, unhappily, too common penchant with him, is that of cheating. Drunkenness is nowhere so common as in Russia. Manual skill is a talent peculiar to him; he possesses in a high degree the faculty of imitation. In point of intelligence, as well as in the general traits of his character, he holds the middle place between the Frenchman and the German. He is less moral than other nations. He has great strength both of body and mind; he readily endures fatigue and privation, and could easily bear all kinds of suffering, if his moral were equal to his physical strength. His equanimity and perseverance often give him an indisputable superiority over other nations, but his nonchalance and his carelessness are perfectly Asiatic. He has zeal and application only by fits and starts, and his idleness is one of the chief obstacles to the development of the powers of the country. He is ambitious, pious, hospitable, and generous; but his piety is closely allied to superstition, and consists almost entirely in the scrupulous observance of religious forms. He is servile.’ In conclusion, Golovine infers, and with truth, that the faults in the Russian character are chiefly owing to despotic government. The Russians are as well bred as any people in Europe. They are very kind and hospitable, and the ladies have the character of being very amiable. A very evil custom, however, is the espionage to which a girl is subjected previous to her marriage. She frequently marries solely to escape this espionage, and as soon as she gains her freedom, she naturally abuses it. From what we can learn, marriages of interest are the rule, and those of love quite the exception. The consequences of such a vicious custom can readily be foreseen.

But let us take a glance at the peasantry. The true Russians, though ignorant, are sharp, active, and intelligent, mild and inoffensive, obliging, civil, nay, servile. Like their betters, they are very polite. It is said a man allows his true character to be seen when he is drunk; if that be so, the Russian peasant is the merriest and most affectionate creature in the world. When they are in that state—for which, by the by, they have a great predilection—you may see them kissing and hugging each other, supporting each other arm in arm through the streets, and singing



like anything but nightingales. We have mentioned the nonchalance of the Russians; this may be observed in almost everything they do. Let us instance the post-office at Riga. If you wished to send a letter abroad and prepay it, you had to take it to the office between the hours of four and six, or it would not be received. Then, again, at the commencement and end of winter, when the ice was in a dangerous state, the mail-bags had to remain on the other side of the river perhaps for three or four days, although it would be open water at the mouth of the river—about seven miles distant! The only explanation we could get of such puerile conduct was, that the contractor for bringing the bags\* across the river merely contracted to bring them over at one particular spot. It is difficult to believe in such absurdities. On the doors of the post-office, they had written up in chalk—as they do scores at a country public-house—'Open from eight till two, and from four till seven!' And for every letter the postman brought, you had to pay him twopence for his trouble. The newspaper office is closed every day between the hours of twelve and two. Then, again, it is a by no means uncommon custom for people to take a siesta after their dinner; if you happen to make a call at that time, you will generally be told that the person you wish to see is asleep. Perhaps there are no people who patronise public conveyances so much as they do; they never walk if they can possibly ride. If you were to suggest to any one what, to us, would be considered a moderate walk, he would stare at you in surprise, and imagine your mind must be wandering. To watch most of the labourers at work, gives an Englishman the fidgets; they take it so remarkably easy, and seem so afraid of the slightest tendency to over-exertion. Laziness is perceptible in nearly everything they do. Watch Russians building; you will perceive one man lifting two bricks, six men carrying a piece of timber that an English labourer would shoulder by himself with ease. Their carts hold about as much as three of our barrows; and the handles of their barrows are so wide apart as to cause considerable loss of power in wheeling them; their spades are very little larger than those the children use on the Margate sands. Look at their women toiling up the planks (they have no ladders) with mortar and bricks; but you need not pity them, since they are just as strong, and quite as rough as the men.

The labourers earn pretty good wages, and as their diet is very frugal, they are enabled to present a more comfortable and prosperous appearance than the English labourer. But our heart has often ached at the treatment to which some of the servants have to submit; and our cheeks have burned with indignation at hearing them spoken to as if they were worse than dogs. Any hole is good enough for a servant to sleep in, and any plank good enough for his bed. One dark and damp evening last spring, we were walking in a large garden belonging to a friend of ours, and we stumbled over a boy who was sleeping in the open air, on some kind of mattress. On remonstrating with our friend for allowing one of his boys to sleep thus, he exclaimed: 'Ach, he won't hurt—he's used to it!' By the by, there is just the same complaint about the difficulty of obtaining good servants in Russia as there is in England, though it cannot be because they are 'spoilt' in the former country by too good treatment. The Russians have a curious custom when engaging their servants; they do not go after their character, as any sensible person would do, but make them deliver up their passports. This, to a certain extent, is useful, as they cannot run away, and it is to some extent a check to dishonesty.

\* They now come by railway.

In the interior, the manners and customs of the people are remarkably primitive. We have sometimes heard of a peculiar class of people in England who are sadly discontented with the present go-ahead age, who would rather retrograde than advance, who sigh most dismally for a return of what they call 'the good old times' and primitive manners. Now, our earnest advice to all these people is, emigrate to the interior of Russia; there you will enjoy primitive manners to your hearts' content. We never saw a fair stand-up fight in Russia; they have no notion of the proper use of their fists, and stand in wholesome dread of those of an Englishman. One day we heard a tremendous uproar in the streets. 'Hollo!' thought we, 'there's murder at least'; so we ran quickly to the spot, and it was two carmen quarrelling and shouting at each other as loud as they could. This went on for some time, till one courageously gave the other a slight push in the chest; this was more efficacious than a knock-down blow here; the quarrel suddenly ceased, and they went on their way, the one, we presume, rejoicing in victory, the other smarting from defeat. It was one of the most curious sights we had then seen; but they are very common.

With regard to personal appearance, the men are mostly fine and good-looking, and the women the reverse. We have frequently been told by travellers that you may go from one end of Russia to the other but very rarely meet with a pretty woman; and they begin to age very early. I should think Russia is the worst country in the world in which to obtain information; you can very rarely get a direct answer to a question. Yet they are abominably inquisitive; and ask the most impertinent questions with the most perfect *sang-froid*. They are very desirous of knowing the amount of your income, how much rent you pay, what wages you give your servants, the price of your boots, and the exact sum you pay your laundress. The Russians are extraordinary people for kissing. It appears a matter of perfect indifference to him whether he kisses a woman or a man, he seems to do both with the same gusto; and it is not a cool, make-believe embrace, but a series of genuine, hearty salutes, like the smacks of a postilion's whip. The servants and lower orders seize hold of your hand and kiss it on the slightest provocation; and if you should happen to foresee their intention, and withdraw your hand, they will fall to at your arm or shoulder. When you are invited to dinner, at the conclusion of the repast all the guests kiss the hand of the hostess. The Russians are a remarkable people for display; they don't care how they live at home, if they can make a good appearance abroad. To see the way in which clerks indulge in champagne when they are out pleasuring is curious indeed. The average price per bottle is about 8s. 6d.; and these young men, with a salary of perhaps 600 rubles a year, will call for champagne with the same degree of confidence as if they had a yearly income of £600. It is quite the rule for people to live up to their means, and, of course, a vast number go beyond.

The Russians cannot be called a scientific people, but they have a remarkable aptitude for acquiring languages. Their own language is particularly difficult, and they prefer speaking French; but no European tongue seems to come amiss with them. The conversation at table is frequently carried on in Russian, French, German, and English; and to hear the little children conversing in these languages is very surprising; they learn them from infancy, for all the Russians who can afford it engage French, English, and German *bonnes*, governesses, or tutors. A very excellent trait in the character of the Russians is the great kindness and respect they show these last two classes. They do not pay them, and look upon them as upper servants, as is too frequently the

case in this civilised country; but think their post a most responsible one; they assist, say they, in forming the manners and morals of their children; in order to do which, they must be respected by their charges, which they certainly will not be, if the same see them treated by their parents with vulgar insolence, contumely, and neglect. Those who do not have their children taught at home, can send them to excellent public or private schools; these are both good and cheap. The Russians pay very great attention to education, and have a minister expressly for that department. Most of the shopkeepers and the lower orders speak nothing but Russ; therefore, a slight knowledge of that language is necessary in your dealings with them. A very little knowledge is sufficient for ordinary purposes, for they are very quick at divining your wishes. The Russian is a pretty, soft, and flowing language, but exceedingly difficult to learn, as it presents no conformity with any other language. However, there are many Englishmen in Russia who speak it remarkably well; and when Englishmen do know it, they speak it with a purer accent than the people of any other nation. One peculiarity in the language is, that it contains thirteen vowels. Golovine says: 'The rules of Russian grammar are arbitrary and confused; consequently, there are not, perhaps, in the country a hundred persons who write their language correctly. Authors themselves vary more or less in their orthography.'

Noblemen are so plentiful in Russia, that the prestige attaching to rank is considerably lessened. We should think barons in St Petersburg are about as plentiful as esquires in London. One of the stablemen in the service of a friend of ours was a nobleman, and mighty proud he was of it! The rank of nobility is generally considered very enviable; but when we state that a Russian nobleman cannot leave the country without permission—that he must return to it when ordered to do so—that he may be arrested at the will of the emperor, and then either liberated or detained in prison for an indefinite time without being brought to trial, we think few stout-hearted English mechanics would be desirous to exchange places with him. Some of the nobility are enormously rich, and have much influence; but the majority are miserably poor. One of the privileges in being a nobleman is, that you cannot be flogged, which, to a Russian, must be very desirable.

There is a great variety of costume in Russia. The middle and the higher classes usually dress in the European style; but the old conservative class still cling to the Russian mode, the peculiarity of which is a blue cap, a long caftan or coat, and Wellington boots worn outside the trousers. In the winter, everybody, of course, wears furs. The gentlemen then wear a long overcoat called a *pel*; it is lined with fur, and has a large fur collar and cuffs. The shape of it is very ungainly, and it has no buttons or fastenings in front, so they lap one side over the other, and keep it thus by pressing their arm against it; and as many of the gentlemen have naturally a very lugubrious countenance, this fashion increases it to such an extent as to cause one to imagine they must have supped the previous night off unripe gooseberries, and were suffering from the unpleasant effects thereof. They have some singular fashions in Riga; for instance, you see young men of fashion walking the streets during the winter wearing lemon-coloured kid gloves, and ladies with white bonnets. But the oddest fashions are those which they adopt with their children. While babies, they are wrapped up just like an Egyptian mummy, so that the poor little things are unable to stir either leg or arm; and as soon as they are able to toddle, the boys have a black velvet, or a blue, red, or yellow silk jacket, and yellow or red silk trousers tucked into Wellington boots that have red leather tops; while they generally

have their hair cropped quite close, like little monkeys. The men frequently adopt the same fashion with their hair. That of the *moujik*, or peasant, is worn long, cut straight round the neck, and parted in front like a woman's; he likewise has a fine beard and moustache. We may here state that the beard is considered *infra dig.* by the higher classes. The peasant is apparently remarkably proud of his linen, of which he makes the greatest possible show, for instead of wearing his shirt inside his trousers, he wears it outside, while the ends of his trousers are tucked into Wellington boots; he usually wears a gaudy-coloured sash round his waist, and a narrow-brimmed, chimney-pot shaped, napless hat on his head. If he cannot afford boots, he swathes his legs in bandages, and has shoes made of plaited bass. In winter, he wears a sheepskin coat, the wool being worn inside; and a fine, frank, noble-looking fellow he frequently is. Many a Russian peasant have we seen that a painter or sculptor would like to get hold of for a model. Their wives, however, are, with the exception of the aborigines of Australia, the ugliest women we have ever seen. In the summer-time, they walk about without shoes or stockings; and in winter they wear a sheepskin coat, like the men, and Wellington boots, so that it is difficult to tell them apart, and at all seasons they wear a handkerchief or shawl round their heads instead of a bonnet. The police are dressed almost like the soldiers; and such a rage is there in Russia for anything appertaining to the military, that they even dress the postman in a military uniform, with a sword by his side. The bishops and priests have magnificent beards and moustaches. They wear a low, broad-brimmed hat, a very long black gabardine, and carry a long cane or staff, tipped with silver or ivory.

#### SUNSET.

I LOOKED upon the sunset,  
I looked along the street,  
I heard the hum of voices,  
And tramp of horses' feet;  
But though the heavens were radiant,  
And painted every cloud,  
I saw no eye look upward  
From out that hast'ning crowd.  
And as a house close blinded  
Looks blank on sky and field,  
So to the glory o'er them,  
Their hearts and eyes were sealed.  
I think the eyes of angels  
Upon this earth must rest,  
When the bright gates of heaven  
Are opened in the west;  
Then, too, their magic whispers  
Fall through the weird, still light,  
Softly as scattered snow-flakes  
Drift on a winter's night.  
Lift up your eyes, O people!  
Be ye not deaf and blind;  
Let not this world's great beauty  
Lie blank unto your mind.

All communications to be addressed to 'The Editors of *Chambers's Journal*, 47 Paternoster Row, London,' accompanied by postage-stamps, as the return of rejected contributions cannot otherwise be guaranteed. Communications should also, in every case, be accompanied by the writer's *Christian and surname in full*.

Printed and Published by W. & R. CHAMBERS, 47 Paternoster Row, LONDON, and 339 High Street, EDINBURGH. Also sold by all Booksellers.